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MEXICO

¿Qué pasa?

A Guide for
Canadian Visitors

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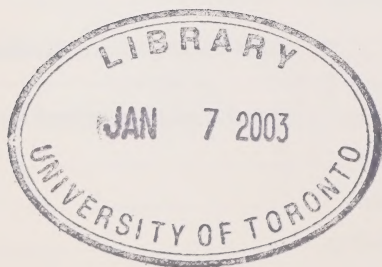
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MÉXICO

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Introduction

Mexico is one of the most popular destinations for Canadian travellers. One million Canadians visit Mexico each year. Vacationers are drawn by the country's superb beaches, pre-Columbian ruins, colonial architecture and the sights and sounds of numerous cultural events. Business travellers are attracted by Mexico's status as one of the most open economies in Latin America. Under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Canadians enjoy special access to pursue investment opportunities, work as professionals or intra-company transferees, and sell their goods and services. Many Canadians combine business and pleasure when they go.

Mexicans are warm, hospitable people, and Canadians will find themselves welcome in their country. But careful preparation is a key part of any successful foreign trip. This is especially true in countries such as Mexico, where a different culture and legal

system will be encountered. A simple checklist of travel requirements can mean the difference between a minor glitch and a major disaster.

Mexican Culture

Whether you are travelling, living or working in Mexico, you will find yourself in a vastly different culture from the one you're used to at home. Mexicans, like Canadians, have as many differences among them as they have characteristics in common. We often use the word "culture" to describe the common characteristics. As important as these generalizations are to our own learning process, always remember that every person is a unique individual. Mexico is a rapidly changing society, where young educated executives are taking over decision-making positions from a more traditional, older generation. And there are distinct regional variations.

Mexicans are friendly and outgoing people, who readily welcome foreign visitors. They appreciate Canadians as people who come from a multicultural society and are sensitive to cultural differences.

Do you speak English?

¿Habla usted inglés?

I don't understand.

No entiendo.

Before You Go

The amount of preparation you need depends on the purpose and duration of your trip. If you are on vacation, and your stay will be fairly brief, you can use the tourist card (*Forma Migratoria Turista* or FM-T) provided by the airline during your flight. If your trip includes business, be prepared to provide information about the purpose of the visit and the companies or individuals you will deal with. A salesperson calling on a client needs less documentation than someone going to Mexico to perform services for a fee.

There are four categories of business traveller recognized under the NAFTA. Business visitors who do not intend to enter the local labour market can enter with a business visitor visa — *Forma Migratoria de Negocios* (FM-N) — that can be obtained from airlines, at the Mexican port of entry or from a Mexican consulate in Canada. Professionals working on contract, intra-company transferees, traders and investors may need professional advice to prepare documentation in advance. The Mexican Embassy in Ottawa or the consulates in other parts of Canada can provide up-to-date information.

Regardless of the purpose of your trip, you will require proof of citizenship to enter Mexico. A

My name is ...

Mi nombre es.../Me llamo...

I don't speak Spanish.

No hablo español.

Canadian passport is the simplest way to prove your citizenship and comply with the requirement for photo identification. A passport is also convenient identification for other purposes, such as changing money in Mexico and re-entering Canada. Also check your immunizations and verify whether other health precautions are necessary. Take into account the high altitudes in the Mexico City area and potential problems with water quality. Book arrangements for travel and accommodation well in advance. Review the contents of this booklet carefully to ensure you have all the documentation you may require.

Mexican authorities vigorously enforce immigration and entry laws. If you are found to be in infringement of Mexican immigration laws, you may face deportation. If the purpose of your visit is anything other than tourism (e.g., not-for-profit, artistic, cultural or sporting activities or business), we recommend that you contact Mexican authorities to obtain the proper visa.

You may also want to read about the social, political and economic environment in Mexico before you go. If possible, take time to learn some Spanish. Mexicans appreciate visitors who make an effort to communicate with them in their own language, even if it is just a few phrases.

Business people may want to consult the Department of Foreign

Affairs and International Trade business Web site, InfoExport (www.infoexport.gc.ca/mx), for market reports, business guides and other useful trade and economic information on Mexico. The Web site of the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City (www.canada.org.mx) also contains useful information to help prepare you for your trip.

Entering Mexico

Some procedures for entering Mexico are more complex than their Canadian equivalents. Some visitors make the mistake of assuming that, if a particular requirement is not enforced on one trip, it will be the same the next time. But because of increased visitor traffic, especially since the advent of the NAFTA, officials are enforcing some regulations more vigorously than in the past. Moreover, there is always the potential for differing interpretations between ports of entry or individual officials. For example, visitors who have never been asked to return their tourist documents on departure may be surprised when they miss a flight because of a lost form. Prudent visitors always obey the law, even though it might not seem to be enforced in a particular instance.

Travel Documents

As already mentioned, proof of citizenship is the fundamental document for all foreign travel, and Mexico is no exception. A passport is the best way to provide this proof. Naturalized Canadian citizens must present a valid passport. Carry a marriage certificate if your name is different from the one on your birth certificate or photo identification. The other required documents vary, depending on your personal circumstances as well as the mode and purpose of your trip. It is prudent to have copies of each document so you can carry them and leave the originals in your hotel safe.

Canadians travelling for business can complete a *Forma Migratoria de Negocios* (FM-N), authorizing

Can you help me, please?

¿Me puede ayudar?

day limit be permitted, such as if a physician certifies that you are too ill to travel. Visitors can be expelled from the country if they violate their tourist status or stay longer than 180 days, and can be fined if they lose their FM-T.

Arriving by Land

Canadian driver's licences are valid in Mexico. But taking a Canadian automobile into Mexico can involve a few complications.

All tourists entering Mexico must obtain a Mexican tourist card (FM-T) except those staying in certain frontier areas along the U.S. border for 72 hours or less. Foreigners entering by car must pay a tourism tax of US\$19 on arrival and will then be given their tourist card.

In addition, a temporary vehicle importation permit — *solicitud de importación temporal de vehículos* — is required for a foreign-registered vehicle to enter Mexico. You can obtain one at the border by providing both the originals and copies of the following documents:

- proof of legal ownership of the vehicle;

the conduct of business for up to 30 days per visit. This permit cannot be extended or renewed, and you will require a new one each time you re-enter the country. You can get this form from airlines, at the port of entry or from a Mexican consulate in Canada. If you want to pursue gainful employment in Mexico, you will need special documentation, discussed later in this guide.

Arriving by Air

Canadian tourists staying up to 180 days do not need to obtain a visa in advance. However, they must complete an entry form, available from airlines or at any port of entry. They will be given a tourist card (*Forma Migratoria Turista* (FM-T)). The FM-T is for all practical purposes a visa. An immigration official will stamp the visa and will determine the number of days you will be allowed to remain in Mexico. Do not assume that you will be granted the full 180 days. The authorities can demand this card at any time. The traveller must carry a copy at all times, and must surrender it on departure. Tourists are limited to activities defined by the FM-T category, which include sports, health, artistic and cultural activities. Only in exceptional circumstances can extensions beyond the 180-

- proof of Canadian registration;
- an affidavit from any lien holders authorizing temporary importation;
- a valid Canadian driver's licence; and
- proof of citizenship.

If the vehicle is rented, a rental contract in the name of the person bringing the car into Mexico, and a description of the car, will be required. If the car is company-owned, you must present proof that you are employed by the company that owns the car.

Temporary vehicle importation permits are not required in certain designated border areas, such as those immediately south of California, where there is a lot of local tourist traffic. But be sure you know exactly where you are going before relying on this alternative.

For tourists, the temporary vehicle importation permit is valid for a maximum of six months. The permit costs US\$15, plus local tax, and must be paid for with an international credit card at the Banjército (Bank of the Armed Forces) located near the Customs office. The credit card must be issued by a major Canadian or U.S. financial institution in the name of

the vehicle owner. Visa, MasterCard and American Express are all accepted, but cash is not. If the visitor does not have a credit card, a bond must be purchased and a US\$15 processing fee must be paid. You must display proof of payment on the vehicle windshield. The permit constitutes a promise to take the car out of the country within a specified period, and the car may be confiscated if you overstay. When you leave the country, be sure to return your temporary importation permit to Banjército in order to obtain a certificate stating that the vehicle was removed from Mexico. Recreational vehicles and large trucks require additional permits.

Please note that any person may drive the vehicle as long as the permit holder is in the car. But assuming they are foreign residents, only the permit holder's immediate family — spouse, father, mother, children or siblings — may drive the vehicle if the permit holder is not in the car.

It is illegal to import used vehicles permanently into Mexico except in designated northern border areas. Your vehicle can be confiscated if it is not properly imported or if your permit expires. It is illegal to sell a car brought in on a temporary permit, even to another non-resident.

How much is it?

¿Cuánto cuesta?

A temporary vehicle importation permit will be issued to a tourist only for one 180-day period in one year. Visitors intending to stay longer are expected to obtain a non-immigrant visa, in which case their vehicle permits will follow the same timing as their visa. If the car will remain in Mexico for more than 180 days, a tax of approximately 30 percent of the value of the vehicle is levied.

Automobile insurance issued outside the country is not valid in Mexico, and you must obtain insurance from a Mexican company. You must do this at the border before entering Mexico. The Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) and the American Automobile Association (AAA) can provide further information, from their offices nearest you. As in other parts of Latin America, if there is an accident, both drivers can be held responsible pending an investigation. They can be jailed and their vehicles seized if there is no proof of ability to pay. In case of serious personal injury, both drivers may be jailed in any event.

Vehicle traffic in Mexico City is restricted to control air pollution. The regulations are based on the

last digit of the licence plate number. On every weekday, vehicles with plate numbers ending in certain digits may not be driven in the city. For example, if the plate number ends in 1 or 2, the vehicle may not be used on Thursdays. This amounts to a restriction on 20 percent of vehicles on each weekday. There are no restrictions on Saturdays or Sundays except when an environmental emergency is declared.

On federal Mexican highways, there is a vehicle assistance service called Green Angel, operated by the Ministry of Tourism (Secretaría de Turismo). Green trucks equipped for basic repairs and first aid travel each major route at least twice daily.

Arriving by Sea

Cruise ships typically stop at more than one country on a voyage, and many of them have their own requirements for documentation. Many cruises originate and terminate in the United States. Travellers on these cruises require a valid passport and, in some cases, ship authorities may retain passports during the cruise. Otherwise there are no special requirements for arriving in Mexico by sea.

Canadian yachts and sailboats can enter Mexico with relatively few procedures. Assuming that

the vessel is longer than 4.5 metres, a temporary import permit — *solicitud de importación temporal* — must be obtained. The cost depends on the size and weight of the vessel, and is twice as much outside regular hours. Upon docking, you must go to the harbour master's office (called the Capitanía del Puerto), immigration and customs, and present, in writing, the name of the boat and the name of all persons travelling on board; proof that the boat is registered to a foreign resident, or a lease agreement for a rented boat; and your destination. You will also need an official document showing departure clearance from Canada. Every person on board must also complete a tourist card. If you place your boat in the care of a marina in Mexico when you leave the country, you must return at least twice a year. A departure clearance (with 24 hours' notice) is required when you take the vessel out of Mexican waters.

Mexican Citizens

Mexicans who have immigrated to Canada and become citizens are entitled to enter Mexico on the same basis as other Canadians. They may, however, have additional rights as Mexican citizens. The New Mexican Nationality Law, which went into effect on

March 20, 1998, after amendments to articles 30, 32 and 37 of the Mexican Constitution, recognizes dual nationality for the first time. Further information is available from the Mexican Embassy in Ottawa or from consulates across Canada (see the section "Mexican Government Offices in Canada"). You can also find more information on the Web site of the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs (www.sre.gob.mx/english/default.htm).

Customs

All persons entering Mexico must present a customs declaration and may be subject to an inspection. In the major ports of entry, travellers who have "nothing to declare" are selected for inspection at random. In the customs area, you will be asked to either press a button or enter your declaration form into a machine. If a light turns red, your baggage will be inspected.

Visitors arriving by air or sea are permitted to bring in US\$300 worth of goods. Those arriving by land are allowed only \$50 per person. Travel-related items, such as clothing, may be brought in duty-free, although there can be differences of opinion over the quantity of baggage that a tourist should have when crossing by land. Goods beyond the duty-free limits may be

subject to duty and taxes, which can be hefty. Visitors should be prepared to document the value of goods they are transporting.

For adults, imports of tobacco are limited to 20 packs of cigarettes or 25 cigars or 200 grams of tobacco. Alcoholic beverages are restricted to three litres of wine, beer or spirits. There are special restrictions on imports of endangered species or goods based on their exploitation.

Visitors bringing commercial samples or display materials for trade shows or other events may obtain a temporary import permit, provided the goods will be re-exported. Goods that are intended as charitable donations can enter duty-free only if they are covered by a government permit. Such permits are issued only to certain approved associations, and a customs broker is usually required.

Mexican customs regulations make special provisions for the import of product samples, such as those typically carried by salespeople or those attending trade shows. An invoice stating that they are not for commercial use must accompany the samples. If the invoice states that the samples are of no commercial value, they will not be subject to duty and will also be exempt from Mexico's system of quality stan-

dards, known as *Normas Oficiales Mexicanas* (NOMs). Nonetheless, any health certificates that are otherwise required must accompany samples of plant and animal products. The requirements for prior approval for importation of certain plant and animal products are waived in the case of samples for personal use, if the samples are accompanied by a letter stating that they are not for commercial use and will not be transferred to another person. Visitors carrying samples should be prepared to pay duty or a bond for temporary importation in case customs officials at the border disagree with the claim of no commercial value.

If you have obtained a visa to live in Mexico, you are allowed to import reasonable quantities of household goods duty-free, one time only. The determination of what is "reasonable" can take some discussion with customs officials, and it is best to be prepared to pay some duty and taxes. You may want to consider using the services of a customs broker. Nevertheless, you should prepare a detailed inventory, in Spanish, and obtain a permit in advance from the Mexican consulate closest to your place of residence in Canada; border officials may still disagree with the consulate's interpretation of what qualifies as duty-free.

Children

Immigration authorities in most countries, including Canada and Mexico, are becoming more vigilant about documentation for children crossing international borders. Unless the child has a valid Canadian passport, and is accompanied by both natural parents, he or she needs special documentation in addition to proof of citizenship.

If only one parent escorts the child, legally certified documentation from the absent parent must be presented in addition to a copy of any separation or divorce decree. This consent is required even if the separation or divorce documents award custody of the child to the accompanying parent. If there is only one parent named on the child's birth certificate and the child is travelling with that parent, no additional releases are required. If the child is travelling with only one parent and the other parent is deceased, the death certificate must be presented. If original documents are not available, you must obtain a notarized statement to present to authorities.

A child travelling to Mexico alone must have a notarized form — *declaración notarial* — that grants permission for a minor to travel to Mexico. Both parents must sign this form, which is

available from Mexican consulates and is valid for 180 days.

Pets

Dogs or cats can be brought into Mexico without advance approval. You will need a certificate of good health, issued within 15 days of your departure date by a licensed Canadian veterinarian, stating that the cat or dog is free of contagious diseases. If you are importing a dog, the health certificate must state that the dog has been vaccinated against rabies, hepatitis and distemper.

When bringing the pet back to Canada, you must present a valid rabies vaccination certificate, issued by a licensed Canadian or Mexican veterinarian, stating that the pet was vaccinated for rabies at least once within the preceding three years. Canada has special regulations governing the importation of more than two dogs aged less than eight months.

Taking birds or exotic pets into Mexico is not generally possible, and the pet may be confiscated on arrival. Consult the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for more information.

Firearms

Mexico maintains strict controls on the importation of firearms.

Handguns are prohibited, and even hunting weapons require complex authorization procedures. Mexico has ongoing problems with drug traffickers, armed robbers

and guerrillas. Possession of an undocumented weapon is taken very seriously and may be grounds for imprisonment.

Visiting Mexico

When you visit Mexico, you will need to consider various aspects of the physical, cultural and legal environment. The specifics will depend on the purpose of your trip and your destination, but the following considerations apply to most travellers.

Travel

Travel within Mexico is mainly by intercity buses and domestic airlines, although car travel and trains are also alternatives.

Private vehicles can be a good way to reach some isolated locations. Mexico has a modern system of toll freeways, but local roads are often in poor condition. Car rentals are available, although they are considerably more expensive than in Canada. Collision damage deductibles are sometimes as high as US\$2,000. Automobile insurance issued outside the country is not valid in Mexico. If you rent a car, be certain that you have full insurance coverage. If you have an accident, you will be jailed if you cannot provide proof of adequate

insurance. Cheap rentals should be avoided because the cars are often in poor condition and inadequately insured. Many visitors find it more practical to hire a car and driver. Travel on the highways at night can be dangerous.

Mexico has an extensive system of long-distance buses run by private companies licensed to operate on national highways. They are generally modern, comfortable and reliable, and many are equipped with video systems. First-class buses make fewer stops but are not necessarily more comfortable than second class. Some deluxe buses on major routes feature food and beverage service. It is not advisable to travel on buses at night.

Mexico has more than 50 airports served by regular passenger flights. Mexicana and Aeroméxico serve the major cities, and smaller regional carriers go to the smaller cities. Fares vary, depending on the popularity of the route, but are generally high.

Train service is a practical alternative on some routes. Ferrocarriles Nacionales de México (FNM), the national railway, is heavily oriented toward cargo, and passenger service can be unreliable and uncomfortable. But FNM also offers a first-class service, called *primera especial*, on selected routes using modern equipment. These services are comfortable and inexpensive but are still relatively slow.

Food and Drink

Visitors to Mexico may suffer from traveller's diarrhea. Micro-organisms in water are the usual cause. Local people tend to be tolerant to these organisms, but visitors may not be. Drinking only bottled water, which is widely available in hotels and restaurants, can prevent problems. Food in tourist-oriented restaurants is generally safe, but eating food purchased on the street is not recommended. Some travellers avoid uncooked food, such as fresh salad, that has been washed in water. It is a wise precaution to take over-the-counter medicine for the treatment of traveller's diarrhea with you when you leave Canada. But if symptoms persist, seek medical attention.

My key please.

Mi llave por favor.

Health Care

Good-quality health care is available from private hospitals and clinics in most parts of Mexico. But it is unlikely that Canadian health coverage will provide adequate protection, and many doctors and hospitals require payment in advance. Provincial health care programs generally include limited coverage for medical expenses incurred during short-term stays outside the country. Coverage may lapse after a few months, and there may be a re-qualification period when you return. Supplementary health insurance policies often cover the full cost of foreign health care, as well as emergency evacuation back to Canada. Canadians who sever their residency ties with Canada and become residents of Mexico usually purchase private insurance in Mexico.

When purchasing health insurance, be sure to ask whether your insurer has an in-house worldwide emergency hotline you can call if you are in trouble. Check whether it is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week; whether the operators are multilingual; and whether nurses or physicians are on staff. Also find out whether your policy:

- pays foreign hospital and related medical costs and, if so, whether it pays "up front" or

expects you to pay and be reimbursed later;

- provides for your medical evacuation to Canada;
- pays for any required medical escort (doctor or nurse) to accompany you back to Canada;
- excludes pre-existing medical conditions. If such conditions exist, notify your insurance company and get an agreement in writing that you are covered for these conditions. Otherwise, you could find your claim null and void under a pre-existing condition clause;
- covers premature births and related neonatal care;
- allows for cash advances if a hospital accepts only such payment; and
- pays for the preparation and return to Canada of your remains should you die while travelling.

Carry a copy of your insurance policy and a list of contact numbers when travelling. If possible, leave a second copy with a travelling companion or friend.

Before leaving Canada, ensure that any special medical needs

you may have are available in the region where you will be staying.

Make sure you have adequate supplies of prescription drugs, eyeglasses and other medical necessities. Over-the-counter drugs are generally available in Mexico, but if you have special needs it is wise to carry the medication with you.

Carrying a duplicate of your original prescription for medication and eyeglasses or contact lenses is recommended. If you lose them, they will be easier to replace.

Other Insurance

Some travellers' insurance packages also cover lost or stolen luggage and flight cancellations for medical or other reasons.

Drugs

There are serious penalties for the possession of illegal drugs in Mexico, and you should exercise the utmost caution when travelling. Never carry a package or luggage for someone else, unless you have completely checked the contents. At the airport, verify that your baggage claim tags match those on your bags before passing through customs. Choose travelling companions carefully, since you may be implicated if they are

found to be carrying drugs. Be equally careful about what is in your car, since the driver may be held accountable.

Prescription medicines and syringes may be considered suspicious by Mexican authorities. Keep all drugs in their original containers and carry the prescriptions with you. If you have a medical need for syringes, carry a medical certificate saying so.

Crime

Some parts of Mexico suffer from serious crime problems. The economic crisis spawned by the devaluation of the peso in 1995 led to a sharp rise in the crime rate, especially street crime. The severity of the problem varies greatly depending on the specific location, and you should take common-sense precautions to protect yourself.

Robbery and theft — the principal crimes faced by foreign visitors — are a bigger problem in large cities. They are also a more serious threat at night than in the daytime. In resort areas, beaches should be avoided at night and visitors should return directly to their hotels from restaurants and nightclubs. Professional travel advisors suggest particular caution when using taxis or public transportation in Mexico City.

There have been many reports of foreigners being beaten and robbed by taxi drivers. You can hire a car and driver by the hour or day at major hotels. If you take a taxi, use a radio taxi or one from a taxi stand (*sitio*). Do not hail taxis in the street. Credit and automated teller machine (ATM) cards are not necessarily safer than cash. There have been some incidents where visitors were held captive so the cards could not be reported stolen. A few visitors have been forced to reveal their personal identification number (PIN), often resulting in a maximum daily withdrawal before midnight and another on the next day.

The following precautions are suggested for Mexico City and other large urban areas.

- Take taxis only from authorized stands, and never in front of nightclubs or tourist facilities.
- Leave valuables and irreplaceable items in a hotel safe or other secure location.
- Do not wear expensive jewellery, carry objects of conspicuous value or wear expensive designer clothing.
- Carry only the money and credit cards you need for any individual trip away from your hotel.

- Make copies of your credit card and ATM numbers so they can be cancelled quickly.
- Do not drive at night and never pick up hitchhikers.
- If you must use an ATM, do so during business hours at a location inside a bank, super-market or large commercial building.
- Avoid drinking alone in bars, especially at night.
- Avoid the subway during rush hour and hold purses and other valuables securely when using any public transportation.

Outside Mexico City and other locations known to be hazardous, travellers should employ the same precautions they would on any trip to a developing country. Leave a copy of your itinerary with someone who can be contacted in an emergency. Phone home at regular intervals if you do not have a fixed schedule. Keep a record of traveller's cheques, credit card purchases and insurance policy details.

The Justice System

When in Mexico, you are subject to Mexican laws and are not entitled to any special protection or consideration because of your Canadian citizenship.

Where are the toilets?

¿Dónde están los baños?

The check, please.

La cuenta, por favor.

Mexico has a highly evolved legal system that functions reasonably well. Based on Greek, Roman and French traditions, the Mexican justice system is comparable to those elsewhere in Latin America and in continental Europe. It is, however, very different from the Canadian system and those of other countries that follow common-law legal traditions.

For Canadians, the biggest difference concerns criminal law. An accused person is considered guilty until proven innocent. For example, if you are accused of drug smuggling, the system will consider you guilty until such time as you can prove your innocence. When a person is injured in an automobile accident, the driver can be jailed pending the results of the investigation. Also, many aspects of fraud involve imprisonment while awaiting investigation results. Bail is not usually available for foreigners, except for very minor crimes.

If you are arrested or detained, you can request that the arresting officer inform the nearest Canadian government office abroad. You will need a Mexican lawyer, and the office can refer you to one who speaks English or French.

Meanwhile, be aware that what you say can be used against you. Avoid making any arrangements with police or court officials unless your lawyer is present. Do not sign anything in Spanish, if you do not understand the language, without the permission of your lawyer.

Getting Married

Canada has no restrictions for Canadian citizens who wish to get married in a foreign country. You will need to present yourself to the Civil Registry Office in Mexico with the following documentation in order to get a marriage licence:

- your Canadian passport;
- your birth certificate (original and copy). The birth certificate must be translated into Spanish and certified by the nearest Mexican consulate to your residence in Canada prior to your departure;
- a blood test (original and copy). The blood test should be a recent one, taken within 15 days of requesting the marriage licence. It should

have the seal of the laboratory or be signed by a physician. It is recommended that you obtain your blood test right before your departure or once you are in Mexico;

- your tourist card (original and copy); and
- if you are divorced, the divorce certificate, certified by the Mexican consulate in Canada.

In addition, you will need two witnesses, one for the bride and one for the groom.

You will need to legalize your marriage certificate for use in Canada. To do this, you will have to contact both authorities of the Mexican state where you were married and Mexican federal authorities, as well as the Canadian Embassy or nearest Canadian consulate. It is recommended that you call the Civil Registry Office on arrival to confirm requirements.

Communications

The Mexican telecommunications network has improved appreciably since long-distance and value-added services were privatized, but the system is still well below Canadian standards. Service in some areas is sporadic, and long-distance charges are high and



Canada Direct

When in Mexico, making calls to Canada can be difficult because of language problems or unpredictable long-distance rates and hotel* surcharges. With *Canada Direct*** service, you can avoid most of the difficulties associated with calling Canada from abroad.

With *Canada Direct* service, you get:

- a simple, automated service that gives you access to the Canadian telecommunications network and to bilingual Canadian operators;
- a choice of payment methods — use your calling card or call collect (check with your local telephone company for card services available);
- Canadian rates — for great savings, use your calling card and ensure you are a member of your local telephone company's long-distance savings plan.

For more information on *Canada Direct* service, visit **www.infocanadadirect.com** or call **1-800-561-8868** before leaving home. To use *Canada Direct* service from Mexico, call **01-800-123-0200**.

Canada Direct is a service offered by Canada's full-service telecommunications companies: Bell, Island Tel, MTS, MT&T, NBTel, NEWTEL, SaskTel and TELUS, in association with Teleglobe Canada. On its international network, Teleglobe carries calls from more than 130 countries where *Canada Direct* service is available.

* Some hotels in Mexico are blocking the service or rerouting the *Canada Direct* access code through the United States. If this happens and you are asked for a credit card number, do not provide it. Try your call from another location and report the incident via the 800 number listed above.

** *Canada Direct* and the *Canada Direct* logo are trademarks of Teleglobe Canada Inc.

I do not do drugs.

Yo no tomo drogas.

I am not interested.

No me interesa.

can be unpredictable. Many hotels add large service charges to outgoing long-distance calls. Canadians living in Mexico sometimes face delays to obtain a telephone line.

When calling Canada, a good alternative is provided by the *Canada Direct* service.

Internet access is now widely available in Mexico. A list of providers is available on the Internet (<http://thelist.internet.com/countrycode.html>). Access can also be arranged through the business centres in the larger international hotels.

Money and Banking

Canadian currency and Canadian dollar denominated traveller's cheques are not widely accepted

I'll arrive a little late.

Llegaré un poquito tarde.

In a little while.

En un momentito.

in Mexico. While they can be exchanged at some banks and most hotels in major cities, you may find it more convenient to carry traveller's cheques denominated in U.S. dollars. Canadian credit cards usually offer competitive exchange rates on purchases in Mexico. Visa, MasterCard and American Express cards are widely accepted in Mexico. Nonetheless, there are often problems with authorization procedures, and you should not rely on them as your only payment option.

Automated teller machines in major centres can access Canadian bank accounts, but caution is advised in Mexico City, where these machines tend to attract criminals. Moreover, there have been many complaints of ATMs debiting the customer's account but not dispensing cash. Canadians can open accounts at Mexican banks, but the procedure is sometimes complex. If you plan to open a bank account, a letter of reference from your Canadian bank will help to expedite the procedure. You will also require a *Forma Migratoria-3* or *Forma Migratoria-2* (see the sections "Working and Doing Business in Mexico" and "Living in Mexico") to open an account.

Working and Doing Business in Mexico

Canadians wishing to work temporarily in Mexico have a variety of options. Normal Mexican immigration procedures allow for the entry of foreigners in occupations where employers can demonstrate that qualified Mexicans are not available for the work. But in almost every case, the four categories of entry available to Canadians under the NAFTA provide better terms of access.

Of the four NAFTA categories, business visitor is the simplest, since it does not require a work authorization. Business visitors can engage in certain business activities in Mexico provided they otherwise comply with immigration requirements for temporary entry. The purpose of these provisions is to facilitate the entry of the short-term business visitor who has no intention of entering the Mexican labour market and will not receive compensation from within Mexico. The appropriate permit can be obtained from airlines, at the port of entry or from one of the Mexican consulates in Canada.

Business persons entering Mexico as professionals, intra-company transferees, or traders and investors may engage in a gainful occupation in Mexico. To do so,

they require a type of non-immigrant visa that includes the authorization for work, the *Forma Migratoria-3* (FM-3). There are different types of FM-3 and, depending on the circumstances, professional advice may be needed.

Business Visitors

Business visitors must complete a Mexican *Forma Migratoria de Negocios* (FM-N), available at a Mexican port of entry, from airlines or from one of the Mexican consulates in Canada. In addition to proof of Canadian citizenship, the business visitor must provide a letter from the employer that:

- explains the purpose of the trip;
- states that the company will cover the visitor's salary and expenses in Mexico; and
- lists the enterprises and cities to be visited in Mexico.

I want to change dollars to pesos.

Quiero cambiar dólares a pesos.

Examples of permitted activities include doing market research, marketing products, negotiating contracts or taking orders. Canadians providing after-sales service are eligible as business visitors but must be prepared to show, in addition to the basic documents, a copy of the sales contract and proof that they possess the necessary specialized knowledge and skills. There is no charge for an FM-N visa, which is valid for 30 days per trip. Business visitors who wish to stay longer than 30 days must obtain an FM-3 visa.

Work Authorization

Unlike business visitors, people who plan to receive remuneration, directly or indirectly, from Mexican employers or clients must apply for an FM-3 visa. This can be done in Canada at the Mexican Embassy or one of the consulates. Regardless of the category involved, fees are levied for all types of work permit. Business visitors who enter on an FM-N for business development purposes and then decide to stay to work on a contract can apply at an office of the National Migration Institute, Ministry of the Interior (Instituto Nacional de Migración, Secretaría de Gobernación). They must, however, obtain an FM-3 before they can begin remunerative work.

Regardless of the NAFTA category involved, the procedures for applying for an FM-3 are basically the same. The visa is normally issued within one month, and is valid for one year, renewable annually for an additional four years. An application for an FM-3 must be accompanied by the following documents:

- a letter in Spanish from the employer addressed to the immigration authority (the letter must contain the applicant's full name and address, request an FM-3 visa and refer to attached documentation; it should explain the purpose of the trip, state that the company will cover the visitor's salary and expenses, and list the companies and cities to be visited);
- your passport (valid for at least six months from the date of application);
- two recent passport-size photographs (no eyeglasses);
- cash or money order for the application fee (US\$96 in early 2001); and
- a copy of your valid tourist or FM-N card, if the application is made in Mexico.

The applicant must also provide details of his or her employment relationship or other source of income in Canada and Mexico. If you're a technician being sent to Mexico by a Canadian company with a service contract in Mexico, include a letter from the Mexican company explaining the activity you will be engaged in.

If the circumstances of the employment change, the FM-3 permit is no longer valid and a new one must be obtained. The requirements vary by category and are described below.

If applying in Canada, four copies of each document must be sent to a Mexican consulate. The original passport will be returned along with the visa, which is a small booklet. An immigration office in Mexico must validate the visa within 45 days of arrival. If applying in Mexico, the procedures are slightly different, and details can be obtained from an immigration office.

The FM-3 can be renewed annually four times at an immigration office in Mexico. After five years, a

new FM-3 can be obtained, but some long-term visitors elect to upgrade to an FM-2 visa at that time. This is discussed under "Living in Mexico."

Specified Professionals

All persons in the professional categories specified in Appendix 1603.D of the NAFTA are exempt from the normal job validation process. In this case, you must provide, in addition to the basic documents, proof that you possess the necessary professional qualifications. You must also prove that you work for a Canadian company by providing a letter on company stationery. The letter must state:

- your job title;
- your duties;
- the specific customer and contract on which you will be working;
- the fee arrangements; and
- the starting and ending dates of the contract work.

Some professionals also need a licence issued by the Directorate General of Professions of the Secretariat of Public Education (Secretaría de Educación Pública, or SEP) before practising in regulated occupations.

How do you get to?

¿Cómo llego a?

I want to go to...

Quiero ir a...

Intra-Company Transferees

Intra-company transferees are executives, managers and staff with specialized knowledge who are employed by a Canadian company. They can be transferred to a Mexican branch, subsidiary or affiliate office for up to seven years. In this case, you must provide, in addition to the basic documents, the following documentation:

- proof that you have been employed with the Canadian company for at least one year;
- a description of your qualifications;
- your current and proposed positions; and
- a detailed outline of the purpose and length of your stay.

If the transferee stays longer than two consecutive years, a residency application or immigrant visa — *Forma Migratoria-2 (FM-2)* — is required. Applications must be submitted by the employer in Mexico directly to the Ministry of the Interior (Secretaría de Gobernación).

Traders and Investors

Traders and investors are Canadian citizens who own or

have a controlling interest in a business enterprise that is to be set up, or is already in operation, in Mexico. Traders are business persons seeking to do substantial trade in goods or services. They must be employed in a capacity that is supervisory or executive, or which involves essential skills. Investors are business persons seeking to develop and direct the operations of an enterprise in which they have invested, or are actively in the process of investing, a substantial amount of capital.

Taxation

The tax situation of Canadian professionals and business executives working in Mexico depends on their individual residency status and the residency status of the organization from which they receive income. When you leave Canada, you need to determine your residency status for Canadian income tax purposes. This affects how you file your Canadian income tax return and the types of income you have to report. Your residency status depends on such things as the purpose and permanence of your stay in Mexico, your residential ties with Canada, and the length and regularity of your visits to Canada. If you have not severed your residential ties with Canada, you will be considered a factual resident of Canada while living or

Could you wait for me a moment?

¿Puede esperar un momento?

travelling outside Canada, and you will be taxable in Canada on your world income. For assistance in determining your residency status or filing a Canadian income tax return, contact the International Tax Services Office of the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (see "For More Information").

Employees rendering services temporarily in Mexico, for no more than 183 days in a 12-month period, are considered non-residents. They are exempt from Mexican personal income taxes on income from an employer that does not have a permanent establishment in the country. If a company has a permanent establishment in Mexico, it will be considered as providing Mexican-source income to the individuals involved. In this case, employees will pay taxes in one of two ways.

- Those who take up residency must file a normal income tax return in Mexico.
- Those who are classified as non-residents will have taxes withheld at source.

Individuals will be considered residents of Mexico when they have established a home in Mexico unless they are physically in another country for more than 183 days in a calendar year. They must also be able to prove residency for tax purposes in that other country. Foreigners working in Mexico under an FM-3 business visa are not generally considered residents for tax purposes unless they establish their principal home in Mexico.

Residents are subject to progressive income tax rates. The top marginal tax rate for the 2001 taxation year was 42 percent for individuals and 32 percent for businesses. Tax brackets are indexed to inflation and adjusted quarterly.

Non-residents on temporary assignment for a permanent establishment, up to 183 days a year, pay taxes on their Mexican-source income at special rates. Amounts less than US\$10,000 annually are exempt, and the rate is 15 percent up to US\$90,000. After that, taxes are withheld at the rate of 30 percent. Taxes withheld at source are considered final, with no return being filed.

Tax Treaty

In 1992, Canada became the first country to sign a bilateral tax

Nice to meet you.

Mucho gusto.

convention with Mexico. It is called the Convention Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United Mexican States for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income. This convention eliminates double taxation and may reduce taxes for firms resident in Canada and doing business in Mexico. The treaty supersedes Mexico's tax laws in several areas, notably the taxation of royalties and fees remitted to Canada. There is a uniform withholding rate of 15 percent on remittances from Mexico to Canada. This differs from the general Mexican law, which provides for up to 35 percent withholding tax on royalty remittances. In addition, the treaty includes limits on rates of withholding tax applicable to dividend remittances, should Mexico implement such a tax.

Setting Up a Corporation or Branch in Mexico

Canadian companies doing business in Mexico can choose between several alternative corporate forms. This description is

intended only as a brief overview of the alternatives. More detailed information is provided in the publication *Steps Towards Entering the Mexican Market*, which is available on the InfoExport Web site (www.infoexport.gc.ca/mx).

Partnership with a Mexican Firm

A partnership is an increasingly popular vehicle used by Canadian firms of all sizes to enter the Mexican market. A good partner can provide market knowledge, infrastructure, human resources and cultural counselling, all of which are vital to successful market entry. Partners can be especially important in service businesses, which depend on a high degree of personal contact and cross-cultural communication. In certain cases, Canadian professionals without Mexican accreditation can work through a local partner to deliver their services.

Incorporation or Branch Registration

Some Canadian companies set up branches in Mexico, but incorporation of a Mexican business entity is a more popular form of market entry. The Mexican *sociedad anónima* (SA) is a limited-liability corporation, as that term is understood in Canada. Canadians can

incorporate business entities on the same basis as Mexican citizens, provided that the company has a physical residence in Mexico. Incorporation can take one or two months, and branch registration can take longer. A lawyer and a tax accountant are usually needed.

The Mexican government has taken steps to accommodate the needs of

short-term service providers. In 1994, the National Commission for Foreign Investment, or Comisión Nacional de Inversiones Extranjeras (CNIE), began to authorize business entities in Mexico that would be established for the sole purpose of carrying out contracts with government agencies. Non-resident companies are now being given a two-year temporary, but renewable, approval from the CNIE.

Living in Mexico

Canadians who decide to live in Mexico on a long-term basis include those who have established careers or businesses there, as well as retirees and others with income from outside the country. Visa requirements depend on whether you have earned income in Mexico.

Employment

Canadians who live in Mexico and who receive remuneration, directly or indirectly, from Mexican employers or clients must apply for a version of the *Forma Migratoria-3* (FM-3) visa that includes permission to work. This can be done in Canada at the Mexican Embassy or one of the consulates, or at any regional immigration office in Mexico. Specific information about the

source of earnings must be provided, as described in the section "Working and Doing Business in Mexico."

Retirees

Canadians who retire to Mexico are not considered tourists and should obtain a *Forma Migratoria-3* (FM-3) visa. For stays of less than 180 days, this visa is available in the visitor category. For longer periods, retirees can obtain a special version of the FM-3 visa. The FM-3 *inmigrante rentista* status is intended for foreigners who are not part of the local workforce but are supported by income from outside Mexico or from Mexican-based investments. Holders of this type of FM-3 are not allowed to engage in remunerative activity in Mexico. They can bring reasonable quantities of household goods and one

Do you accept cheques?

¿Se aceptan cheques?

I do not have change.

No tengo cambio.

automobile with them duty-free when they arrive.

An FM-3 visa can be obtained from the Mexican Embassy or one of the consulates in Canada, or from an immigration office in Mexico. The procedures are described under "Working and Doing Business in Mexico." The only difference in the case of *rentistas* is that instead of details of employment, the *rentista* must show proof of minimum income.

The FM-3 can be renewed annually up to four times at an immigration office in Mexico. After five years, a new FM-3 can be obtained, but many foreign residents elect to upgrade to an FM-2 visa at that time. An FM-2 is an immigrant visa. It must be renewed annually, but after five years the holder is eligible to apply for *inmigrado* status, which is permanent residency. An FM-2 application must be made in Mexico and usually requires a lawyer.

The minimum income for either an FM-2 or an FM-3 changes periodi-

cally and is expressed as a multiple of the Mexico City minimum wage. As of early 2001, it was approximately 10,000 Mexican pesos per month. About half the minimum is required for each dependant. Twelve months of bank statements showing monthly interest, Canadian pension receipts or a social security letter are accepted as proof of financial resources. Such documents must be notarized before submission.

Retirees receiving pensions from a Canadian source will generally be subject to withholding taxes in Canada and may also be taxed in Mexico. The Canada-Mexico tax treaty prevents double taxation of these earnings by setting maximum rates for the total tax. Pensioners contemplating living in Mexico should verify the details with the International Tax Services Office of the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

Real Estate

Canadians (and other foreigners) may acquire real estate in Mexico, and they have the same rights as Mexican citizens, except for three principal restrictions.

- They cannot own mineral or water rights, or property for agricultural or forestry purposes.

- They must apply for a permit to own land.
- They may not own property within a 100-kilometre band along the borders or a 50-kilometre zone along the coasts.

Non-residents must acquire an additional permit from the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores) or SRE.

Indirect foreign ownership of land within the border and coastal zones can be arranged using a *fideicomiso* — a bank trust with a 50-year term. The bank holds legal title to the property, but the buyer is the beneficiary and may use and enjoy the property. A *fideicomiso* can also be used outside the restricted zones to establish multiple owners or successor rights.

To prevent the assembly of large estates, Mexican law restricts property size, depending on the type of land involved. For example, the limit is 100 hectares for irrigated land and 300 hectares for non-irrigated land.

Please speak more slowly.

Más despacio por favor.

It's a great pleasure.

Es un placer.

Can you take me to...

Me puede llevar a...

I will be back at...

Regresaré a...

Mexican real estate transactions can be complex, and Canadians should research potential property purchases carefully. Real estate agents are not licensed or regulated. Zoning laws may restrict the use of some properties, and financing is not generally available. It can be extremely difficult to evict existing tenants. Closing costs are usually borne by the buyer and include agents' commissions and transfer taxes. The buyer also pays the fee for a notary public (*notario*), who must handle all real estate transactions.

Time share properties are becoming increasingly common in Mexico. There have been many complaints about unscrupulous operators in this business, and buyers should proceed with caution. Mexican law allows time share contracts to be cancelled within five days with no penalty.

Returning Home

When planning your trip home, there are a few things to consider. First, make sure you have cash ready to pay the Mexican departure tax. In early 2001, this tax was US\$18. The peso equivalent is accepted, but Canadian dollars are not. Normally this tax must be paid in cash on departure from Mexico, although in some circumstances it may be included in the airline ticket price. The tax applies to adults and to children two years of age and older.

On departure, travellers must surrender the tourist card they were given when they entered the country.

Returning travellers should be prepared for customs procedures when they enter Canada. Everything acquired abroad must be declared, so keeping receipts of all purchases is advisable. Customs forms are usually distributed on flights to Canada and are available at airports and land and sea ports of entry.

Canadian residents can bring back \$50 worth of goods after 24 hours outside the country, \$200 worth after 48 hours and \$750 worth after seven days. Alcohol and tobacco may not be included in the 24-hour exemption, but otherwise you may include up to 1.14 litres of liquor or 1.5 litres of

wine, or a case of 24 355-millilitre containers of beer. Tobacco imports are restricted to 50 cigars or cigarillos, 200 cigarettes, 200 grams of tobacco and 200 tobacco sticks. Travellers importing alcohol and tobacco products must satisfy the age restrictions of the province or territory where they enter Canada.

Canada imposes special restrictions on a variety of imported goods. They include meat and dairy products, plants, weapons, vehicles and environmentally harmful products, as well as exotic animals and goods based on their exploitation. Check with Customs Border Services in advance if you plan to import any articles in these categories. It is illegal to bring obscene materials or hate propaganda of any kind into the country.

Canadians who have resided in Mexico for 12 months or more are entitled to special customs treatment for household and personal items. Details of these provisions are found in *Moving Back to Canada*, a booklet published by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

If you have any doubts about what you're allowed to bring back, call the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's toll-free information service.

For More Information

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

For consular assistance and emergency consular services:

Tel.: **1-800-706-2900** (in Mexico) or **(613) 996-8885** (in Canada)

Fax: **(613) 995-9221** or **(613) 943-1054**

E-mail: **voyage@dfait-maeci.gc.ca**

Web sites: Consular: **www.voyage.gc.ca**

Department: **www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca**

Trade Information: **www.infoexport.gc.ca/mx**

Canadian Embassy in Mexico: **www.canada.org.mx**

Publications (free)

Bon Voyage, But... Information for the Canadian Traveller

Canadian Performers: How to Enter the United States

Child Sex Tourism Fact Sheet
(on-line only)

China (Including Hong Kong): A Guide for Canadian Visitors

Crossing the 49th: Advice for Canadians Travelling to the United States

Destination: Success — Services for Business Travellers

Dual Citizenship: What Travellers Should Know

Guess Who Was Detained at the Border for Drugs!

Guide for Canadians Imprisoned Abroad

Her Own Way: Advice for the Woman Traveller

International Adoption and the Immigration Process

International Child Abductions: A Manual for Parents

México ¿ Qué pasa? A Guide for Canadian Visitors

Out on a Limb: Advice for the Adventure Traveller

Retirement Abroad: Seeing the Sunsets

Teaching English in Korea
(on-line only)

Teaching English in Taiwan
(on-line only)

Travelling Abroad? Assistance for Canadians

What No Child Should Endure

Working Abroad: Unravelling the Maze

To access or order:
Consult the Consular Web site
(see above) or
Tel.: **1-800-267-8376** (in Canada)
or **(613) 944-4000**

Country Travel Reports (free)

Country Travel Reports provide information on safety and security conditions, health issues and entry requirements for 225 travel destinations. This information is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

To access or order:
Consult the Consular Web site
(see above) or
Tel.: **1-800-267-6788** (in Canada)
or **(613) 944-6788**
FaxCall: **1-800-575-2500** (in
Canada) or **(613) 944-2500**

Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA)

Web site: **www.ccra.gc.ca**

Customs

Customs Border Services
Automated Customs Information
Service
Tel.: **1-800-461-9999** (in Canada)
or **(204) 983-3500** or
(506) 636-5064

Publications (free)

I Declare

Importing a Firearm into Canada

Importing a Vehicle into Canada

Moving Back to Canada

To order:

Canada Customs and Revenue
Agency, National Distribution
Centre, Ottawa, ON K1A 0L5
Tel.: **1-800-959-2221** (in Canada
and the U.S.) or consult the CCRA
Web site or contact your local
Customs Border Services office.

Taxation

International Tax Services Office,
2204 Walkley Road, Ottawa, ON
K1A 1A8
Tel. (collect calls are accepted):
1-800-267-5177 (in Canada and
the U.S.) or **(613) 952-3741**
Non-Resident Withholding
Accounts: **1-800-267-3395** (in
Canada and the U.S.) or **(613)
952-2344**
Problem Resolution Program:
1-800-661-4985 (in Canada and
the U.S.) or **(613) 952-3502**
Fax: **(613) 941-2505**

Publication (free)

Canadian Residents Abroad

To order:
Consult the CCRA Web site or call
1-800-959-2221 (in Canada and
the U.S.) or **(613) 952-3741**.

**Do you have
identification?**

¿Tiene una
identificación?

Canadian Automobile Association

Web site: www.caa.ca

Tel.: (613) 247-2117

Fax: (613) 247-2118

Canadian Food Inspection

Agency

Web site: www.inspection.gc.ca

Import Service Centres (ISC):

Tel.: Eastern ISC 1-877-493-0468

Central ISC 1-800-835-4486

Western ISC 1-888-732-6222

Publication (free)

What Can I Bring into Canada?

To order:

Canadian Food Inspection Agency,

Public Affairs, 59 Camelot Drive,

2nd Floor East, Nepean, ON

K1A 0Y9

Tel.: 1-800-442-2342 or

(613) 225-2342

Citizenship and Immigration

Canada (CIC)

Web site: www.cic.gc.ca

CIC Call Centres

Tel.: 1-888-242-2100 (in Canada)

or

Montreal (514) 496-1010

Toronto (416) 973-4444

Vancouver (604) 666-2171

Publications (free)

Dual Citizenship

How to Prove You Are a Canadian Citizen

To order:

Consult the CIC Web site or

Tel.: (613) 954-9019

Elections Canada

The Elections Canada Enquiries

Unit provides information on

voting eligibility, registration and

voting methods, the electoral

schedule or any other aspect of

the electoral process free of

charge to Canadian electors. In

Mexico, call 001-800-514-6868 or

consult www.elections.ca.

Environment Canada — CITES

Web site: www.cites.ec.gc.ca

Tel.: 1-800-668-6767 or

(819) 997-1840

Fax: (819) 953-6283

HEALTH ISSUES

Drugs and Travel Information

Web site: www.voyage.gc.ca

Canadian HIV/AIDS

Clearinghouse

Web site: www.clearinghouse.cpha.ca

Publication (\$)

Basic Facts About AIDS

To order:

1565 Carling Avenue, Suite 400,

Ottawa, ON K1Z 8R1

Tel.: (613) 725-3434

Canadian Public Health Association

Web site: www.cpha.ca

Publications (\$)

Don't Drink the Water: The Complete Traveller's Guide to Staying Healthy in Warm Climates

International Travel and Health: Vaccination Requirements and Health Advice

Travel Immunization Record

To order:

1565 Carling Avenue, Suite 400,
Ottawa, ON K1Z 8R1
Tel.: (613) 725-3769

Canadian Society for International Health

List of travel clinics:

Web site: www.csih.org

Tel.: (613) 241-5785

E-mail: csih@csih.org

Health Canada

Web sites:

Health Canada:

www.hc-sc.gc.ca

Travel Medicine Program:

www.travelhealth.gc.ca

Tel.: (613) 957-8739

FAXlink: (613) 941-3900

MedicAlert®

Web site: www.medicalert.ca

Tel.: 1-800-668-1507

Mexican Ministry of Tourism

24-hour telephone number for tourists requiring assistance in any part of Mexico:

Tel.: 01-800-903-9200;

in Mexico City: 5250-0123

Passport Office

Web site: www.ppt.gc.ca

Tel.: 1-800-567-6868 (in Canada)

Montreal (514) 283-2152

Ottawa-Hull (819) 994-3500

Toronto (416) 973-3251

Vancouver (604) 586-2500

Radio Canada International (RCI)

Web site: www.rcinet.ca

Tel.: (514) 597-7555 (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation)

Canadian Government Offices in Mexico

Assistance and information may be sought in Mexico from the Consular Section of the Canadian Embassy and the consulates throughout the country. When calling from within Mexico the area code for all Canadian offices is 01; when calling from outside Mexico the area code is 52.

Mexico City

Canadian Embassy,
Calle Schiller No. 529

(Rincón del Bosque),
Colonia Bosque de Chapultepec,
11580 Mexico, D.F., Mexico

Postal address: P.O. Box 105-05,
11580 Mexico, D.F., Mexico

Tel.: 52 (55) 5724-7900;

toll-free (within Mexico):

01-800-706-2900

Fax: 52 (55) 5724-7943

If you call the Embassy from within Mexico City, the telephone number is 5724-7900 and the fax number is 5724-7943.

E-mail: **mxico@dfait-maeci.gc.ca**
 Web site: **www.canada.org.mx**

Acapulco

Consulate of Canada,
 Centro Comercial Marbella,
 Local 23,
 esq. Prolongación Farallón y
 Miguel Alemán,
 Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico
Postal address: Apartado Postal
 94C, 39670 Acapulco, Guerrero,
 Mexico
 Tel.: **52 (744) 484-1305, 481-1349**
 Fax: **52 (744) 484-1306**

Cancún

Consulate of Canada,
 Plaza Caracol II, 3er piso,
 Local 330,
 Boulevard Kukulcán km 8.5,
 Zona hotelera, 77500 Cancún,
 Quintana Roo, Mexico
 Tel.: **52 (998) 883-3360**
 Fax: **52 (998) 883-3232**

Guadalajara

Consulate of Canada,
 Hotel Fiesta Americana, Local 31,
 Aurelio Aceves 225, Col. Vallarta
 Poniente, 44100 Guadalajara,
 Jalisco, Mexico
 Tel.: **52 (33) 3615-6270, 3615-6215, 3615-6266, 3616-5642**
 Fax: **52 (33) 3615-8665**

Mazatlán

Consulate of Canada,
 Avenida Playa Gaviotas No. 202,
 Zona Dorada,
 82110 Mazatlán, Sinaloa, Mexico

Postal address: P.O. Box 614,
 82110 Mazatlán, Sinaloa, Mexico
 Tel.: **59 (669) 913-73-20**
 Fax: **52 (669) 914-66-55**

Monterrey

Consulate of Canada,
 Edificio Kalos, Piso C1,
 Local 108A,
 Zaragoza 1300 Sur y Constitución,
 64000 Monterrey, N.L., Mexico
 Tel.: **52 (81) 8344-3200, 8344-2753, 8344-2906, 8344-2961**
 Fax: **52 (81) 8344-3048**

Oaxaca

Consulate of Canada,
 Pino Suarez 700, Local 11B,
 Multiplaza Brena, Col. Centro,
 68000 Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico
Postal address: Apartado Postal
 29, Sucursal C, Colonia Reforma,
 68050 Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico
 Tel.: **52 (951) 513-3777**
 Fax: **52 (951) 515-2147**

Puerto Vallarta

Consulate of Canada,
 Calle Zaragoza 160, Interior 10,
 Colonia Centro, 48300 Puerto
 Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico
 Tel.: **52 (322) 222-5398, 223-0858**
 Fax: **52 (322) 222-3517**

San José del Cabo

Consulate of Canada,
 Plaza José Green, Local 9,
 Boulevard Mijares s/n, Colonia
 Centro, 23400 San José del Cabo,
 Baja California Sur, Mexico
 Tel.: **52 (624) 142-4333**
 Fax: **52 (624) 142-4262**

Tijuana
Consulate of Canada,
Germán Gedovius No. 10411-101,
Condominio del Parque,

Zona Río, 22320 Tijuana,
Baja California Norte, Mexico
Tel.: **52 (664) 684-0461**
Fax: **52 (664) 684-0301**

Mexican Government Offices in Canada

The Embassy of Mexico and Mexican consulates can provide assistance and guidance to Canadians in need of information about the immigration regulations in Mexico. For more information, contact:

Embassy of Mexico

45 O'Connor Street, Suite 1500
Ottawa, ON K1P 1A4
Tel.: **(613) 233-8988**
Fax: **(613) 235-9123**
Web site: **www.embamexcan.com**

Consulates General of Mexico in Canada

Montreal

2055 Peel Street, Suite 1000
Montreal, QC H3A 1V4
Tel.: **(514) 288-2502, 288-4916**
Fax: **(514) 288-8287**
Web site: **www.consulmex.qc.ca**

Toronto

199 Bay Street, Suite 4440
P.O. Box 266, Station Commerce
Court West
Toronto, ON M5L 1E9
Tel.: **(416) 368-2875, 368-8141, 368-1847**
Fax: **(416) 368-8342**

Vancouver

810-1130 West Pender Street
Vancouver, BC V6E 4A4
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Mexican Government Tourism Offices

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1 Place Ville Marie, Suite 1526
Montreal, QC H3B 2B5
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Fax: **(514) 871-3825**

Toronto

2 Bloor Street West, Suite 1502
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Vancouver

1610-999 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC V6C 2W2
Tel.: **(604) 669-2845**
Fax: **(604) 669-3498**

Guess who was detained at the border for drugs?



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Prescription drugs and even some over-the-counter medications can be closely scrutinized by customs officials.

When travelling outside of Canada, take along a copy of your prescription and ensure you carry all medicines in their original containers. If you use syringes, bring along a doctor's certificate proving they're for medical use.

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Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade

Ministère des Affaires étrangères
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